



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public school open enrollment application period is Feb. 2-20

Online application is encouraged

MADISON—Parents have an opportunity to apply to send their children to any public school district in the state during Wisconsin's three-week open enrollment application period for the 2009-10 school year.

In Wisconsin, children are assigned to school districts based on the location of their parents' home. The Feb. 2-20 open enrollment application period is the only tuition-free opportunity for most parents to apply for their children to attend public school in a school district other than the one in which they live. Since the program began, participation in open enrollment has grown. During the 2007-08 school year, 25,898 students transferred to another school district through open enrollment.

Open Enrollment		
	Applications	New and Continuing Transfers
1998-99	5,926	2,464
1999-00	6,691	4,858
2000-01	7,616	7,213
2001-02	9,523	9,603
2002-03	11,859	12,379
2003-04	13,770	15,413
2004-05	15,367	18,210
2005-06	16,461	21,025
2006-07	17,803	23,406
2007-08	18,745	25,898
2008-09	20,953	Not Available

State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster noted that the annual open enrollment application period supports parental involvement and shared responsibility for educating children. "Wisconsin's open enrollment program provides an important option for parents to be involved in their children's education," she said.

Under the full-time public school open enrollment program, parents must apply during the Feb. 2-20 application period to the school district they wish their children to attend. On-line application is encouraged. Application deadlines are firm. Early and late applications are not accepted. Parents will be informed by April 10 whether their open enrollment applications have been approved or denied.

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In most circumstances, transportation is the responsibility of the parent. However, some school districts may provide partial transportation. Parents with questions should call both the resident and nonresident school district offices to find out if any transportation will be provided. Reimbursement of some transportation costs is available for families whose children are eligible for free or reduced-price school lunches based on federal income guidelines.

The Department of Public Instruction provides the following guidelines for parents who wish to apply for open enrollment.

- Parents are urged to apply on-line directly from the open enrollment website <http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/psctoc.html>. The on-line application will be available from midnight Feb. 2 until 4 p.m. on Feb. 20. Applications cannot be made at any other time.
- Paper applications can be obtained from the DPI or any public school district. Paper application forms must be submitted to the nonresident school district no earlier than Feb. 2 and no later than 4 p.m. on Feb. 20. A postmark for paper forms will not meet the requirement. Hand-delivery of paper application forms to the nonresident school district is strongly recommended.
- Parents may submit applications to no more than three nonresident school districts for each child during the open enrollment application period. Submitting more than three applications to nonresident school districts will result in all applications being invalidated.
- Forms must be filled out completely and accurately. Contact the local school district office or the DPI if assistance is needed in filling out the form. An inaccurate or incomplete form may result in denial of an application.
- Parents may request enrollment in a specific school or program in the nonresident school district; however, enrollment in the requested school or program is subject to space and other limitations and is not guaranteed.
- Most students who attended a nonresident school district under open enrollment last year are not required to reapply for the 2009-10 school year. However, if the student will be entering middle school, junior high school, or high school in the 2009-10 school year, parents should call the nonresident school district to find out if reapplication will be required.
- Parents may apply for their children to attend 4-year-old kindergarten under open enrollment only if the resident school district also offers a 4-year-old kindergarten program for which the child is eligible.

To assist parents in submitting open enrollment applications, a directory of public school districts is available on the DPI website at <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/schlsrch3.aspx>. More information is available from local school districts or from Mary Jo Cleaver, DPI, (888) 245-2732 (toll-free), or maryjo.cleaver@dpi.wi.gov.

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2009_08.pdf.